

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASH DC PRIORITY 2842

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 OECD PARIS 20357

PASS: OES FOR GRANT, GLASOE, EPA FOR THOMPSON, CEQ,
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SUBJECT: OECD ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - JULY 6-8, 1976

1. SUMMARY. OECD ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 19TH SESSION WAS HELD JULY 6-8. ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANCE INCLUDED SERIOUS REVIEW OF THE PURPOSE AND FORM OF COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS, THE POSSIBILITY OF THE COMMITTEE UNDERTAKING A PROJECT IN THE NORTH-SOUTH FRAMEWORK, AND THE QUESTION OF PUBLIC AVAILABILITY AND DISSEMINATION OF COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS. THE COMMITTEE'S POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS AND FLUOROCARBON ACTIVITIES RECEIVED FAVORABLE ATTENTION

2. MAIN AGENDA ITEMS INCLUDED ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT, POLLUTION CHARGES, THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SWEDISH ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND THE UPCOMING JAPAN REVIEW. RECOMMENDATIONS ON ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT, WASTE MANAGEMENT, AND COASTAL MANAGEMENT WERE ADOPTED; POLLUTION CHARGES WILL BE CONSIDERED AGAIN AT THE NEXT MEETING.

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3. PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDATIONS. THE MOST INTERESTING AND POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF THIS SESSION WAS SUSTAINED EFFORT TO PROBE FORM, VALUE, AND PURPOSE OF OECD RECOMMENDATIONS. US HAS BEEN CAMPAIGNING AGAINST PROLIFERATION OF GENERALIZED AND TRITE RECOMMENDATIONS. OUR GOAL HAS BEEN TO REDUCE NUMBER AND STRENGTHEN IMPACT OF RECOMMENDATIONS. STRONG REINFORCEMENT WAS RECENTLY RECEIVED FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WHO URGED SECRETARIAT TO MOVE IN EXACTLY THAT DIRECTION. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THERE ARE TO BE NO GENERAL "GUIDE-LINE" TYPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE FUTURE, BUT MERELY THAT THEY SHOULD BE LIMITED TO CLEARLY APPROPRIATE THEMES, AND FOLLOW UP BY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE SHOULD BE LIMITED TO RECOMMENDATIONS INVOLVING IDENTIFIABLE INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. SECRETARIAT HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PROVIDE BUREAU NEXT DECEMBER WITH ITS ADVICE AS TO WHICH CURRENT PROJECTS (A) SHOULD LEAD TO RECOMMENDATIONS WITH FOLLOW UP TO SECURE NATIONAL ACTION, (B) SHOULD RESULT IN RECOMMENDATIONS SEEN AS GENERAL GUIDE-LINES TO NATIONS, NOT INVOLVING FURTHER COUNCIL FOLLOW UP, OR (C) SHOULD BE SEEN AS COMPLETE IN THEMSELVES. RE THIS LATTER POINT, MUCH OF THE ACTIVITY CARRIED ON BY OR FOR THE COMMITTEE HAS A LEGITIMATE INFORMATION POTENTIAL OF ITS OWN WHICH, IF HANDLED PROPERLY (SEE BELOW UNDER "DERESTRICTION"), DOES NOT NEED TO BE DRESSED UP WITH FORCED RECOMMENDATIONS.

4. NORTH-SOUTH INTERFACE. THE COMMITTEE WAS TOLD THAT THE SECRETARY-GENERAL WAS VERY INTERESTED IN SEEING IT UNDERTAKE A PROJECT WITHIN THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF DC-WQC RELATIONSHIPS. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THE SUBJECT IS TIMELY AND IMPORTANT, MANY COUNTRIES EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT MOVING EITHER TOO QUICKLY OR TOO FAR AFIELD FROM THE COMMITTEE'S LONG-STANDING INTERESTS AND COMPETENCE. SUBJECT WILL BE PURSUED AT DECEMBER MEETING. MEANWHILE, MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL COMMENT ON SECRETARIAT'S PROPOSAL AS TO POSSIBLE CHARACTER OF SUCH A NORTH-SOUTH PROJECT. SECRETARIAT HOPES TO FREE RESOURCES FOR SUCH A PROJECT BY TRANSFERRING ONE OR MORE 1977 PROJECTS TO "LEAD COUNTRY"

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APPROACH. MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL INDICATE WHETHER THEY ARE WILLING TO BE A "LEAD COUNTRY" FOR ANY PROJECT. (US SUPPORTED THIS, REMARKING THAT "LEAD COUNTRY" APPROACH SHOULD BE TESTED ON OWN MERITS AS USEFUL WAY OF APPROACHING CERTAIN PROJECTS.) COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN WILL INVITE SECRETARY GENERAL TO DISCUSS HIS NORTH-SOUTH INTERESTS PERSONALLY WITH COMMITTEE NEXT DECEMBER.

5. FLUOROCARBONS AND POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS.
DIRECTOR DESCRIBED RECENT PCB CONSULTATION AND THE
FLUOROCARBON PROJECT IN HIS OPENING REMARKS. US STRONGLY
SUPPORTED THE DIRECTOR'S POSITIVE REPORT ON THE PCB
CONSULTATION AND UNDERLINED THE CONSULTATION'S

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RECOMMENDATION THAT THE ISSUES OF LABELING AND
SUBSTITUTES RECEIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION BY THE COMMITTEE.
OH FLUOROCARBONS, WE ARGUED NEED TO KEEP MOMENTUM GOING,
STRESSED IN BEN TO REMEMBER ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF
ISSUE, AND EMPHASIZED THAT THE "AEROSOL STUDY" IS ONLY
A FIRST STAGE, IF CURRENT SCIENTIFIC OPINION DOES NOT
CHANGE. WE CALLED ATTENTION TO UPCOMING MEETING AT
LOGAN, UTAH, AND DISTRIBUTED FLYERS. INTERESTINGLY,
NO-ONE AT ANY POINT UNDERTOOK TO CHALLENGE THE
FLUOROCARBON PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH THE JAPANESE REITERATED
VIEW THAT UNCERTAINTIES REMAIN VERY LARGE, AND NOW
STUDY MORE URGENT.

6. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT. RECOMMENDATIONS
WERE ENDORSED BY COMMITTEE WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT FURTHER

CHANGE. MAJOR ISSUE, AS EXPECTED, WAS RECOMMENDATION DEALING WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR EFFECTS OF LONG RANGE TRANSPORT OF SULPHUR OXIDES. BRITISH AND SCANDINAVIANS EVENTUALLY WORKED OUT COMPROMISE. THE BASIC TASK FORCE REPORT ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT WILL BE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER AND WILL INCLUDE AGREED RECOMMENDATIONS. FIRST FOUR ANNEXES WILL BE DE-UNCLASSIFIED

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RESTRICTED. THE URBAN ENERGY SECTION (CHAPTER 5) AND ANNEX WILL, HOWEVER, BE ISSUED SEPARATELY, LATER, AFTER ONGOING PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED.

7. COASTAL MANAGEMENT. RECOMMENDATIONS DEVELOPED AND ENDORSED, THOUGH COMMITTEE ABANDONED ATTEMPT TO DEFINE "COASTAL ZONE" CAUSING TWO COUNTRIES TO RESERVE ENDORSEMENT. COMMITTEE ACCEPTED US POINT THAT THESE WERE VERY VAGUE "GUIDELINE" TYPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS, SO PROPOSED REQUIREMENT TO FOLLOW UP AND REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION WAS DELETED.

8. POLLUTION CHARGES. US PREFERENCE WAS FOR COUNCIL SIMPLY TO CALL ATTENTION TO DETAILED REPORT ON POLLUTION CHARGES, WHICH IS MORE USEFUL DOCUMENT THAN BOWDLERIZED RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD BE. DUTCH DELEGATION (PLUS ITALIANS AND FRENCH, LESS FERVENTLY) STRONGLY FAVORED ENDORSEMENT OF POLLUTION CHARGES AS ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE AND PRESSED FOR ADOPTION OF DRAFT RECOMMENDATION. SWEDES RESOLUTELY OPPOSED; OTHERS AMBIVALENT. US COMPROMISE LANGUAGE FOUNDERED ON DUTCH OPPOSITION. TIME RAN OUT, AND RECOMMENDATION WILL BE CONSIDERED AT DECEMBER SESSION.

9. BIAF PARTICIPATION. SECRETARIAT HAD INVITED HEAD OF THE BIAF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSION OF POLLUTION CHARGES. MUCH RESISTANCE DEVELOPED TO SUCH OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION. COMPROMISE WAS ACCEPTED WHEREBY HE WAS ALLOWED TO ADDRESS COMMITTEE, ON ONE-TIME BASIS, BUT DEPARTED BEFORE DISCUSSION BEGAN.

10. REVIEW OF SWEDISH ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY. LONG DELAYED, REVIEW HAS BEEN UPDATED THROUGH 1975 AND WAS ACCEPTED FOR DERESTRICTION. CENTRAL THEME OF REVIEW IS USE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EXPENDITURES AS COUNTER-CYCLICAL ECONOMIC TOOLS. HOWEVER, THE SWEDES INTERESTINGLY ARGUED THAT THEY SAW LITTLE CHANCE OF THEIR 1971-73 EXPERIENCE HAVING SIGNIFICANT TRANSFERABILITY, SINCE MANY OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WERE NOT LIKELY TO REPEAT THEMSELVES. SECRETARIAT PAPER CONTAINING

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"CONCLUSIONS" WILL BE RE-DRAFTED IN LIGHT OF SWEDISH
AND OTHER COMMENTS.

11. JAPANESE REVIEW. PREPARATIONS WERE REVIEWED. MOST
SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT WAS CLARIFICATION THAT A TWO-
TIERED REVIEW (TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND POLICY OFFICIALS)
IS NOT INTENDED. ONLY HIGH LEVEL POLICY OFFICIALS ARE
BEING ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN NOVEMBER REVIEW.
SECRETARIAT WILL SOON ISSUE INVITATIONS TO PARTICIPATE
(AVERAGE 2-3 PERSONS PER COUNTRY EXPECTED). JAPANESE
ALREADY WRITING KEY ENVIRONMENT OFFICIALS IN MEMBER
COUNTRIES, URGING THEIR PARTICIPATION.

12. WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICIES. SEVERAL COUNTRIES

(INCLUDING THE US) STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF THIS AREA FOR FUTURE WORK. A BACKGROUND REPORT WAS SENT FORWARD FOR DERESTRICTION. THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATION ON WASTE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES WAS ADOPTED. ALTHOUGH RATHER GENERAL, IT IS AS AN IMPORTANT FIRST STEP TOWARD DEVELOPING SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEMBERS IN LIMITED, DISCRETE AREAS.

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13. DERESTRICTION. US-SPONSORED WRITTEN PROCEDURE TO GET FASTER ACTION ON DERESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS WAS APPROVED, ALBEIT WITH A SOMEWHAT EXPANDED TIME SCHEDULE TO ACCOMMODATE AUSTRALIANS AND BELGIANS. FOUR DOCUMENTS IN ADDITION TO THOSE MENTIONED ABOVE WERE RECOMMENDED FOR DERESTRICTION. THE US ADDITIONALLY TABLED THE REQUEST THAT THE 1976 PCB AND MERCURY REPORTS BE DERESTRICTED. THESE WILL BE PROCESSED THROUGH THE NEW WRITTEN SYSTEM. US DELEGATION CITED PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS IN WAY OF PRODUCTION OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS ON NON-SENSITIVE SUBJECTS, PROMISED TO RETURN TO SUBJECT AFTER RULES STUDIED FURTHER, STRESSED NEED TO LOOK BEYOND SIMPLE QUESTION OF DERESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS, DEVELOP MEANS TO GET USEFUL DOCUMENTS INTO HANDS OF POTENTIAL USERS OUTSIDE OF SMALL OECD CIRCLE.

14. THE NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 13-15, 1976.
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